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Narikkuni shows the way in solid waste management

Lights up roads using gas produced from biowaste plant

At a time when urban local bodies are grappling with the issue of safe disposal of garbage, Narikkuni grama panchayat in Kozhikode district is showing the way in solid waste management.

A biowaste treatment plant set up seven years ago is not only treating the waste from vegetable shops, slaughterhouses, fish markets and hotels but is also illuminating the 50-odd street lights in the grama panchayat.

E.K. Bharathan, plant operator, says: “Around 250 kg of market refuse is disposed of here daily. I collect it from vegetable shops, and those from slaughterhouses are dumped into a tank by their owners. The roads are lit from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. using the gas produced in the plant.”

However, he says that fish waste is not being disposed of in the plant nowadays. “Since the plant is adjacent to the village office, waste from fish markets is excluded due to its

malodour,” he says.

Waste from slaughterhouses is mainly transported to faraway disposal sites. “Most of us dispose of waste through licensed vehicles after paying a fee. If the capacity of the plant is expanded, we will be better off, and be a part of this illuminating project,” says Shanavas who runs a poultry unit.

The villagers are happy about the success of the project. “Our market is clean and odourless,” M. Ahmed, a villager, said.

Nevertheless, some have got a different opinion. “The limited capacity of the plant which is around 250 kg could not accommodate the entire waste in the market. Although we have licensed vehicles coming periodically to collect waste, we lay aside some remains for the biogas plant,” a vegetable grocer says.

Initially, when the plant was set up in 2010 during the tenure of grama panchayat president M.P. Rukkiya, it was decided that

the slurry waste will be used for organic farming. But the distribution of manure is not so successful.

P.K. Babitha, panchayat president, says that plastic carry bags below 30 microns had been banned in the village even before the government insisted on such a measure. “Today, we assist Kudumbasree units to make cloth bags to stamp out plastic from the area,” she adds.

Around 250 kg of market refuse is disposed of daily at the biowaste plant

E.K. Bharathan

Plant operator